

First-year students complete MCC 101 in the fall and MCC 102 in the spring. The course “involves two central goals that are mutually reinforcing: to teach critical thinking and writing and to address the challenges and opportunities of living in a multiracial and multicultural society” (*Simmons College Course Catalog 2008-10*). All sections use a multidisciplinary approach to their investigations.

MCC 101-01: Questions of Social Justice

We will consider the multiple ways in which social constructions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and others influence not only individual identity but also one's privilege, rights, and obligations in society. We will grapple with the idea of social justice and equal access by examining public policies and multiple arenas of active debate.

MCC 101-02: Politics, Protests, and Music

This course examines the relationship between political/social movements, protests, and music throughout pivotal moments in American History. Through readings of primary documents, we will explore race and gender diversity in the historical context and apply it to contemporary society. Music enhances the impact of the emotion and sentiments of political movements and protests. The legacy of the fights for minority rights will be examined with reference to their status in today's political realm.

MCC 101-03: Bearing Witness Through Words

Those who bear witness are our true historians and storytellers. Their testimony and remembrances teach us the painful truth about our world, our society and ourselves. By listening to their stories, we learn to tell our own. This course will examine works of short fiction, poetry, memoir, and visual representations from writers and artists who bear witness to social injustices of race, class or gender. Through the study of various writers and artists including Martha Collins, Primo Levi, and Shaun Tan, we will not only witness the prejudice they have experienced, but also the ability of the human spirit to rise above hatred. We will look carefully at *how* these stories are told and the implications they may have for our own lives.

MCC 101-04 Children of the Machine: How Technology Invented Us

We will examine how technology shaped our existence from prehistoric times to nineteenth century colonialism. The landscape of race, class and gender in the modern world reflects the very early patterns of evolution, migration and technological development. We will look at creation myths, pyramids, stone circles, early astrology/astronomy, and the links to class structure in ancient societies. The apparent inevitability of the “March of Progress” is belied by the seemingly random twists of fate that steered the development of science. We will reflect on how things might have been different, and consider the intersection of technology and social issues up to the present day.

MCC 101-05 The Nature and Nurture of Gender

Do you think differently than the men you know? Do you have a female brain? Were you born that way or is your brain the product of its environment? Are gender and sex the same thing? What is gender anyway? In an attempt to answer these (and many other) questions on the differences between males and females we will apply a range of scientific explanations to empirical research on gender-related variability.

MCC 101-06: Talk is Telling: Language and Power

What is the relationship between language and society? We will use sociolinguistic concepts to help us examine how language can vary among groups of people according to their region, age, class, race, and gender and what the implications are for access to social prestige and political power. We'll also study how we as individuals choose to vary our language every day based on our purpose and audience, and what that reveals about our personal identity, social ambitions, and group solidarity. Theory will be brought to life through *field work*.

MCC 101-07 Sex, Drugs, and Freedom

This course will consider how issues of race, gender, and class relate to the legal and cultural status of prostitution and drug use. This course will explore both the political principles underlying the law, and the practical consequences of "the war on drugs" and "anti-vice" initiatives. Do anti-prostitution and anti-drug laws violate civil liberties? Are they applied fairly? Are they necessary to safeguard our communities? This course will emphasize critical and analytical thinking and developing effective writing skills.

MCC 101-08: From Borders to Barrios: Growing Up Latino

Latinos balance on the hyphen between their own culture and the Anglo world, pressured to choose between the two. Works by Francisco Jimenez, Michele Serros and others highlight the struggle for identity. In class we will explore this struggle by examining current controversies surrounding legal and illegal immigration, education and language preferences, health and healthcare delivery, family and gender roles, work and definitions of success, and assimilation vs. maintenance of culture.

MCC 101-09: Academic Achievement Gap or Academic Opportunity Gap? Does anyone have a bridge to sell us?

Since the beginning of the modern-day civil rights movement, our society has recognized the existence of relative gaps between the academic outcomes of White Americans and various Americans of color. The question is does the main source of the gap lie within the students themselves, in the schools they attend, or in the very fabric of the US society? Furthermore, what is the most effective education reform effort to bridge the gap? By the end of the course, students will be asked to imagine that they are the superintendent of an urban district and outline their argument for the primary source of the gap and how to most effectively bridge the gap.

MCC 101-10: My Space, Your Space, Our Space: Changing the World, One Space at a Time
No, this is not about technology! It's about service in all its forms and how your space connects with the space of others. Faced with a confusing and at times chaotic world, people are reaching out to find ways to make a difference. In an attempt to translate anxiety into action, service opportunities abound. City Year, Doctors Without Borders, Legal Action Volunteers, Campus Compact, Facebook Impact, and others address impulses to associate, serve, give, and lead. This course will explore why people civically engage and what difference they hope to make. Readings include short stories, philosophy, poetry, and essays that ask us to consider the meaning of civic engagement. Two hours of service per week with a community partner in Boston will be part of the course experience.

MCC 101-11: Questions of Value, Happiness and Good Life

Although we have not met, this is what I know about you: you want to be happy. Wanting to be happy is universal. The philosopher Aristotle says that happiness is the highest value at which all our activities ultimately aim. If so, what should we do to increase happiness in the world, or at least decrease unhappiness? In this writing course, I invite you to critically examine and write about class, race, and gender inequality with an eye to enhancing personal happiness and social harmony

MCC 101-12: Who Am I and What Do I Bring?

We define ourselves using multiple identities. This course will explore identity development and the ways in which individuals move within and among their group memberships in our complex society (where some identities are more valued than others). We will examine how multiple identities intersect to create unique experiences and contribute to our ability to engage with one another in an effort to create a better world. Our reading will include research based and theoretical books, articles, and essays from different social science disciplines.

MCC 101-13: Decades Matter: The Fifties -- Beginning or Ending?

"Pleasantville" captures our stereotype of the fifties: a grey TV tranquility, a deadening desperate commitment to conformity, sorely in need of the kind of technicolor transfusion that the sixties would provide. In fact the fifties began with a commitment to "peace, progress, and prosperity" (and internal security), accompanied by the ballads of Dinah Shore and Nat King Cole. It ended with confrontations over racial inequities and political repression, accompanied by rock and folk music of Elvis Presley, Johnny Mathis, and Little Richard, Joan Baez and the Weavers. What happened here? This course will examine the political, cultural, and social dynamics of this era through writings-- fiction and nonfiction -- of and about the decade; selections by Salinger, Baldwin, Lee, Miller, Dillard, Kerouac, Ginsberg, Hansberry, Reisman, Halberstam, and Mills, as well as a scanning of popular culture, music, film, and TV.

MCC 101-14: Global Women/Our Common History

This course will explore the impact of global female immigration to the US from a Latino, Afro-Caribbean and global perspective. We will consider multiple ways in which social construction of race, class, gender, sexuality and mentorship influences our individual and immigrant identity. This female experience will be viewed from a privileged /non-traumatic or non-privileged/traumatic immigration experience. We will deal with acceptance and social justice, as we examine a host of current, local, national and international issues, media reports and specially government immigration policies. Who are global women? What is our common history?

MCC 101-15: Sex, Reproduction, and Social Control

Most people consider their choices about love, sex and reproduction to be the most private and individual parts of their lives. Yet we are constantly confronted with both overt and coded messages how we should conduct our romantic, sexual, and reproductive lives. How have cultural expectations, laws, education, and prejudices shaped our supposedly private choices? On a larger scale, how have questions of sex and reproduction shaped our nation's identity—and even what it means to be human? We will primarily discuss literary texts (stories, novels, film, television), but these will be informed by readings from history and current events.

MCC 101-16: Memoir: More Than a Story

To write a memoir, according to Patricia Hampl, is “to speak about profound matters that are, like it or not, general and abstract,” not merely personal. “We sense that in order to live together we must learn to speak of peace, of history, of meaning and values.” This course will examine the memoir’s power to uncover the commonalities of human experience while at the same time instilling an appreciation for the richness and variety of individual experience. Through the study of modern memoirs, we will discuss the ways in which factors such as culture, race, class, gender, and faith shape an individual’s memory and perspective. We will also study and write personal essays as a means of expressing one’s own core values and appreciating others’.

MCC 101-17: Persuasion in Society

This course is designed to heighten students’ understanding of the ways in which people influence one another. Students examine the sender, channel, and receiver aspects of persuasive communication. The class provides analysis of social and cultural dimensions of persuasion, psychological factors, and persuasive tools used, as well as theories of attitude change. Students are encouraged to take a critical approach to examining this marketing perspective through various readings, exercises, and writing assignments. **PLEASE NOTE THIS SECTION IS HELD T/TH 12:30 TO 1:50.**

MCC 101-18 Talking Black, Talking Back

This course examines Black American’s place in US society from slavery to the present. Topics include the legacy of slavery, emancipation, the Harlem Renaissance, Civil Rights, have they achieved the American Dream, and is there a need for reparations to the black community. Discussion areas include: assimilation vs. separation, Black Nationalism, multiculturalism, Black feminism, sexual politics, black lesbianism, and neoconservatives and their critics.

Transfer Students please refer to your transcript evaluation form to see if you need MCC 101 AND MCC 102; if so, please keep this list of course descriptions handy for your registration choices; or need MCC 102; if so, you must register for MCC 102 in the spring 2010 term; or have fulfilled the two semester writing/MCC requirement.

Dix Scholars, if your transcript evaluation form indicates that you need MCC 103, you should register for MCC 103-01, Terry Muller, Tuesday 4 pm - 6:50 pm. Designed for adult students.
MCC 103 (fall 2009)

***MCC 103: Higher Education: Access, Opportunity, Equity?**

Since the passage of the Higher Education Act in 1965, colleges and universities have opened their doors to an increasing diversity of students, including adult learners. This course will explore the promise of higher education as experienced through the multiple perspectives of adult learners returning to school. **(Tuesday, 4- 6:50pm)**